



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Fred Akshar

## Senator Fred Akshar Releases Survey Results on Vaccination Exemptions for Children in New York

FRED AKSHAR June 12, 2019

| ISSUE: **VACCINES**



Senator Fred Akshar released the results of his latest online surveys asking constituents to weigh in on a proposal to end religious and any other non-medical exemptions for vaccination for children attending school in New York State.

All 50 states require that students be vaccinated for diseases like measles, mumps, whooping

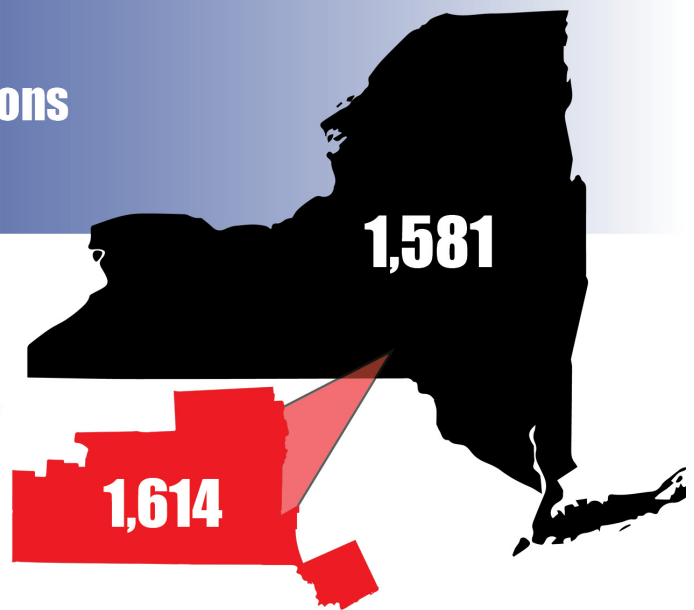
cough, chickenpox and polio. All states allow exemptions for medical reasons, but 47 (including New York) allow exemptions for religious reasons and 16 also permit “philosophical exemptions.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, measles cases nationwide have more than doubled from 2018 to over 1000 this year, with at least 850 cases in the New York City and Rockland County regions of New York.

Akshar sought input on Senate bill [S.2994](#) which would repeal all non-medical exemptions from vaccination requirements for children.

The survey, posted on [Akshar.NYSenate.Gov](#) drew over 3,000 total responses from residents in the 52nd Senate District and surrounding areas.

**Senator Fred Akshar's  
Survey Results : Child Vaccinations  
May 21 2019 - June 7 2019**



**3,195 Total Responses**  
**1,614 from Senate District 52**  
**1,581 from Outside SD 52**

**Do you support removing non-medical exemptions from vaccination requirements for children attending school in New York State?**

**Answers**

	<b>Senate 52 Residents</b>	<b>Residents Outside SD52</b>
<b>Support removing all non-medical exemptions for vaccinations</b>	<b>70.3 %</b>	<b>6.6 %</b>
<b>Support keeping the current non-medical religious exemptions for vaccinations</b>	<b>8 %</b>	<b>24.3 %</b>
<b>Support only allowing religious exemptions for children with written consent from the child's physician</b>	<b>5 %</b>	<b>0.3 %</b>
<b>Support expanding non-medical vaccination exemptions in New York to include philosophical exemptions</b>	<b>5.5 %</b>	<b>26.2 %</b>
<b>Believe vaccinations for children should not be required by law</b>	<b>10 %</b>	<b>42.5 %</b>
<b>Don't Know/Undecided</b>	<b>1.3 %</b>	<b>0.1 %</b>

**Senate 52 Residents**

**Outside Senate 52**

## Survey Results

The results showed:

- Within the 52nd Senate District, 70% of respondents support removing all non-medical exemptions for vaccinations.
- Many of those supporting the removal of non-medical exemptions cited the need to protect public health, noting that requiring vaccinations for children protects those who are unable to receive vaccinations due to allergic reactions or other complications from contracting these diseases.
- Responses from other regions of New York outside the 52nd Senate District showed a plurality of 42.5% believing that no vaccinations for children should be required by law.
- Of those opposed to any vaccination requirements, many stated that the choice on whether to vaccinate should ultimately fall to each child's parents. Others said the exemption was a matter of religious freedom.

Answers from respondents in the 52nd Senate District were similar to a recent [Siena Poll](#), which showed 84% of New Yorkers statewide support ending the religious exemption for vaccinations.

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*“Eliminating all non-medical exemptions for child vaccination raises serious questions about the balance of personal choice, religious freedom and the public health and safety of our children,” Akshar said. “From speaking with local educators and health professionals, it’s*

*clear to me that in the case of vaccinations, this is simply a matter of public health and safety. In this case, a parent's personal choice for their own child has the potential to do serious harm to many other children in their school and community."*

Throughout the 2019-2020 Legislative Session, Akshar will regularly post new Community Voice Survey questions on Akshar.NYSenate.Gov and publish the results of previously asked questions.

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*"No matter my personal views on any issue, it's important for me to continually allow the people of the 52nd Senate District to weigh in, be heard and share the results," Akshar said. "It's about continuing to be open and accountable to the people."*

## **Full Survey Results**

### **Question: Do you support removing non-medical exemptions from vaccination requirements for children attending school in New York State?**

**52nd Senate District (1,614 Responses)**

- 70.3% - Support removing all non-medical exemptions for vaccinations

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- 8% - Support keeping the current non-medical religious exemptions for vaccinations
- 5% - Support only allowing religious exemptions for children with written 80 consent from the child's physician
- 5.5% - Support expanding non-medical vaccination exemptions in New York to include philosophical exemptions
- 10% - Believe vaccinations for children should not be required by law
- 1.3% - Don't Know/Undecided

#### **Responses from New York State Residents Outside of the 52nd Senate District (1,581 Responses)**

- 6.6% - Support removing all non-medical exemptions for vaccinations
- 24.3% - Support keeping the current non-medical religious exemptions for vaccinations
- 0.3% - Support only allowing religious exemptions for children with written 80 consent from the child's physician
- 26.2% - Support expanding non-medical vaccination exemptions in New York to include philosophical exemptions
- 42.5% - Believe vaccinations for children should not be required by law
- 0.1% - Don't Know/Undecided

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2019-S2994A**

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- Introduced

- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Relates to exemptions from vaccinations due to religious beliefs; and repeals subdivision 9 of section 2164 of the public health law relating to exemption from vaccination due to religious beliefs

January 31, 2019

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Brad Hoylman-Sigal**

Do you support this bill?